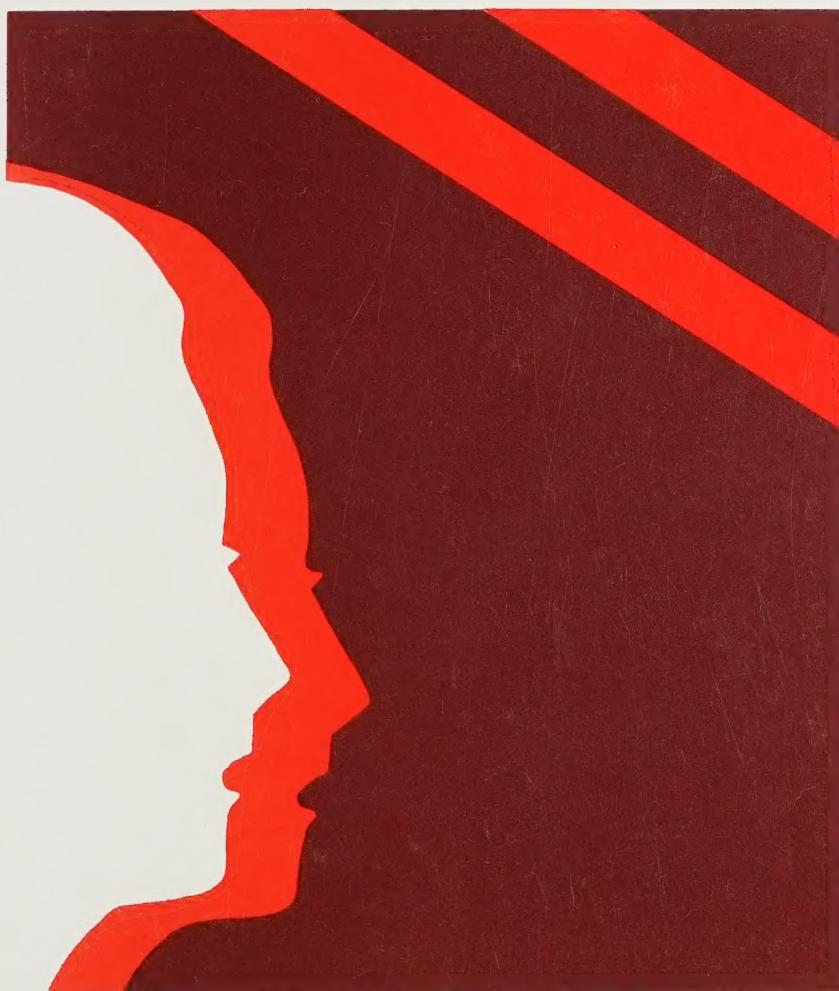


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Ontario

# Women and Local Government

## ...a beginning





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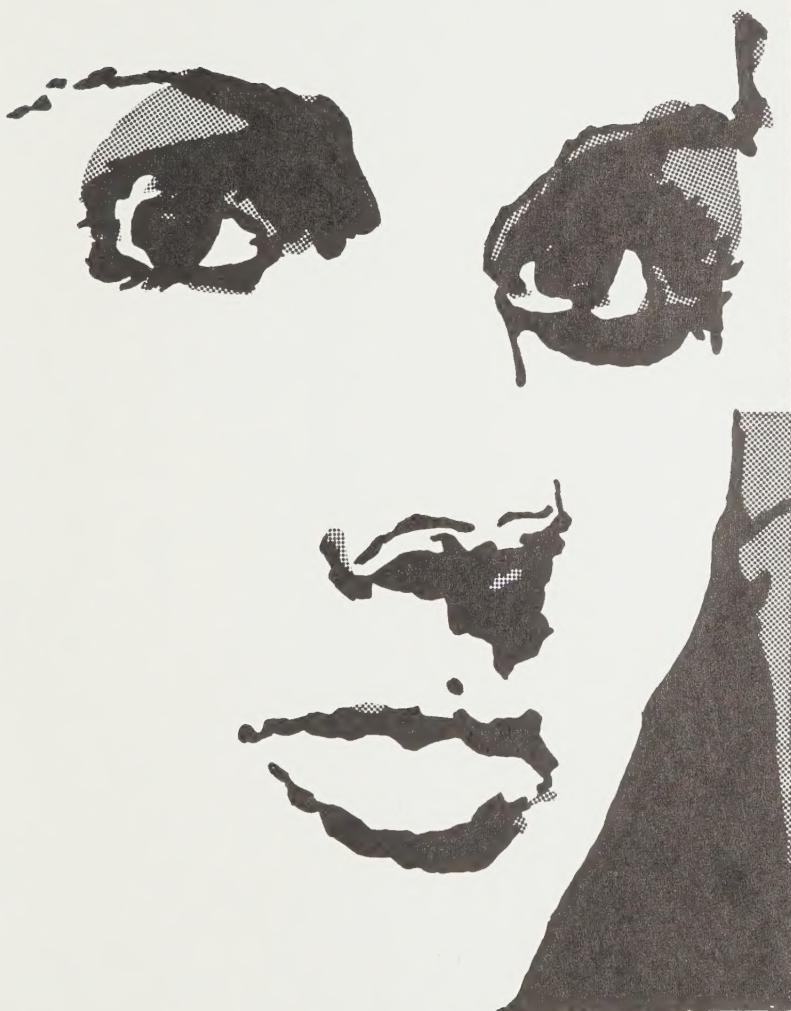
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“Women want to be more active in everything which affects their lives.”

“It’s vital to have female role-models in local government.”

“The special talents of individual women in the province often are neglected as a result of traditional attitudes towards female capacities.”



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# Introduction

This booklet is intended as a working manual for women who want to become involved in the public life and government of their community. Excerpts from a number of sources\* have been used to:

- describe in general terms the *nature and structure of local government in Ontario*;
- explore the question of *personal commitment* in local government;
- summarize recommendations of a number of women currently active in local government in Ontario on *how to get involved*.

These objectives have been endorsed by the Ontario Conference on Local Government (OCLG), a non-profit organization whose objectives are:

- to interest citizens generally in local government by increasing their knowledge and understanding in this area.
- to provide knowledge to those who would serve on public bodies, either elected, appointed or administrative.
- to encourage citizen participation in local government.

The OCLG and the Ontario Ministry of Treasury, Economics and Intergovernmental Affairs are co-sponsors of this booklet. The booklet, prepared by ministry staff, will be used as a resource for conferences on women in local government in 1975-1976, to mark International Women's Year.

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\*See Bibliography

# The Basis of Participation: Personal Commitment

## Part I



In 1974, the Ontario Conference on Local Government (OCLG) undertook a study of women in local government. In the resulting report, *Women in Local Government*, Caroline Ion, project co-ordinator, identified the principal issues that women, in particular, should consider:

- self-image and special qualities
- support of family and friends
- sex-role stereotyping and discrimination
- financial cost or sacrifice
- the commitment of time, and the balance between public and private life.

Mrs. Ion feels that people who want to participate in local government and who have taken time to familiarize themselves with the structure and functions of local government in Ontario must come to grips with certain basic questions, such as:

Do I want to commit myself?

What do I want to contribute?

Why?

What priority am I prepared to give to public life vis-à-vis my private life?

Am I ready to confront the various problems and demands that will no doubt "come with the job"?

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### Self-Image and Special Qualities

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In a very personal way, your motivation to participate and your commitment will force you to consider your own self-image. Even after you have decided to get involved, you may have second thoughts. Perhaps you will doubt your ability to tackle the local scene in particular, or the larger world of careers in general.

Laura Sabia, chairman of the Ontario Council on the Status of Women, thinks that women have been trained to think they are inferior, and that it therefore takes time to develop inner confidence. The Ontario Government Report *Equal Opportunity for Women in Ontario* puts it another way:

"The special talents of individual women in the province often are *neglected* as a result of traditional attitudes towards female capacities."

In the face of this, ask yourself, "What do I have to offer?" and take the advice of others: "Don't be too modest! Don't intimidate yourself by underrating yourself!" Participation in local government is a learning process.

From a survey of women currently involved in local govern-

ment we offer a sample of their comments regarding personal skills and attitudes which they felt they could bring to local government:

- “I saw it as a challenge and proceeded on that basis.”
- “an ability to deal with people, to understand and to want to help people; an ability to invest a lot of myself in the job and a strong interest in the politics and history of my area”.
- “an ability to organize . . . a desire to get the job done”.
- “generally interested in community politics and life”.
- “when you say ‘yes’, you do your best to give what help you can”.

And from Mrs. Ion's analysis of the personal experiences of women who have realised successful political careers in local government, the following qualities are considered to be of importance:

- a sense of humour and the ability not to take yourself too seriously
- resilience
- experience in community work
- energy and enthusiasm
- a substantial ego.

## The Support of Family and Friends

Support of family and friends is obviously very helpful, perhaps even essential. Women on council or otherwise politically active in local affairs have said that the most positive factor in their decision to run was encouragement from family and friends.

These women also indicated that more than financial problems, political opponents or the voting public, women have to contend with society's expectations that their role is merely supportive or not in the public domain. In such circumstances, then, family support is clearly essential.

On the particular subject of husbands, experience has shown that a woman's commitment must, in effect, be that of her husband too. Often husbands must be prepared to baby-sit, help more around the house, and support their wives in their own more public roles. Children, too, can be encouraged to help.

For more information on how your friends can offer support and help in an actual campaign, see Part II, *Getting Involved*.

## Sex-Role Stereotyping and Discrimination

In political participation at the local level, sex-role stereotyping has been reported as an issue of both major and minimal importance.

In “A Woman in Politics” (*Chatelaine*, April 1973), former Sudbury Alderman Mary Conroy commented on the patronizing attitude of male colleagues on council: “Don't you worry your pretty head about that, my dear!” Such attitudes were “frustrating and insulting” for her. As a member of City Council, she pointed out that “Worrying about *that*, whatever it is, is my job, and I *must* be concerned about it”.

Further, Mrs. Conroy found that some male voters just assumed that she lacked the political or technical experience to help them, and therefore refused to deal with her. Others attempted to “browbeat” her into agreeing with them, and were annoyed when she chose to differ with them.

In her paper for the OCLG study, “Careers for Women in Local Government”, Alexandra Kerr identified one problem to be the feeling on the part of voters that women do not have “business experience”, supposedly an essential prerequisite. ‘It is often assumed’, she says, “that because a local businessman has made a modest reputation for success in his field, he would obviously make a clear thinking, objective and rational councillor. But the corollary always seems to be that a women who has spent her days balancing her household budget, organizing and supervising the family's activities, and taking part in various local activities would never make the grade because she lacks that only experience considered valid, 'business' experience.”

On the other hand, Anne Levac, a research assistant with the Association of Counties and Regions of Ontario (ACRO), found in her study paper, “Getting Elected and Doing the Job”\*, that for some women in municipal politics sex-role stereotyping could be minimal: “Women who desire to take an active part in local politics and who prove their abilities as capable workers and organizers generally overcome any major problems, take their turn on important committees and receive the confidence of their fellow aldermen. A great deal depends on the attitudes of the women entering politics — their self-confidence and desire to put the required effort into the job.”

On the broader question of role stereotypes, the Royal Commission *Report on the Status of Women in Canada* states:

“Women are expected to be emotional, dependent and gentle and men are thought to be rational, and independent and aggressive. These are the qualities assumed to be suitable for women in the closed world of the home, husband and children, and for men in the outside world of business, the professions or politics. The stereotypes and models of be-

\*Ms Kerr's and Ms Levac's papers can be found in the OCLG study report, *Women in Local Government* (See Bibliography).

haviour derived from this assumption do not necessarily correspond to the real personalities of a great number of men and women."

Discrimination by women themselves is also part of this issue. To explain the ambivalence in women's support for other women, the Royal Commission Report commented that:

"It appears that many women have accepted as truths the social constraints and the mental images that society has prescribed and have made these constraints and images part of themselves as guides for living. This theory could partly explain why some women are inclined to identify themselves with the collective problems of their sex and tend to share the conventional opinions of society."

For women seeking careers in the administrative fields of local government, Ms Kerr detailed the prevalent management view to be that:

"women won't move for a better job, they don't want responsibility, they are too busy being concerned about their families to get involved at work, they take more sick leave, they can't find sitters, they really don't want responsible jobs or the problems of a career. They won't stick it out to get up the ladder."

Noting that historically "there have been few women in the career areas of local government", Ms Kerr found that while "there is no real obvious discrimination to put one's finger on . . . (women) are going to have to work extra hard to develop careers for themselves."

Ms Kerr did find, however, that the position of clerk of a local government "has long been one of the most crucial, most visible and most male-dominated functions". The job often calls for shorthand and for successful completion of Queen's University's municipal clerk's and treasurer's course\*, though not for a degree. Unfortunately, while anyone can take the course, males are more often encouraged by their employers than are females. Few women apply or complete the course, and very few females are municipal clerks.

Values and attitudes in local government employment, however, have begun to change. Ms Kerr found that most municipalities are beginning to recognize "that they need to start building a corps of available, talented staff . . . more and more (municipalities) are turning to requirements of university degrees or college diplomas in the various professions . . . the more that women are encouraged to enter these fields, the more they will find doors to local government open to them."

\*A course highly valued by municipal staff. See Section II, on administration.

As a footnote to these comments, we include these figures: in Ontario municipalities in 1975, approximately 8 percent of the elected or acclaimed officials were women; approximately 25 percent of selected administrative staff (clerks, treasurers and clerk-treasurers) were women. Of the latter figure, however, most of that 25 percent were clerk-treasurers, often part-time, in small rural municipalities.

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## Financial Cost or Sacrifice

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Service as an elected member of your local council is going to cost you money. Your participation may require your family to make certain sacrifices. In some instances, election to council might produce conflicts of interest in business or professional affairs for other members of your family. The actual political campaign can place a considerable burden on the family's resources. Women with children may be lucky to break even, because of additional child-care expenses, the use of convenience foods, the need for wardrobe extras and the filing of a separate income tax statement. As an alderman in Sudbury, Mary Conroy noted that she was still paying off her bills three months after the election — and this in only an alderman's contest at the local ward level. With her relatively limited income, she pointed out that she was restricted to campaigning at the ward level, prohibited from ever mounting a city-wide Board of Control campaign with its high price tag. Even though elected office may entail only part-time work, municipal election financing is clearly an important question.

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## Your Public and Private Life

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"Politics can be a jealous taskmaster; meetings, committee work, public functions, (familiarizing yourself with agenda materials) and studying the issues take time," says Mrs. Conroy.

With elected office, the intrusion of the public eye into your private life has to be accepted as part of the job. Mrs. Conroy adds that, "Everything you do, and in smaller centres this carries over to all members of your immediate family, is subject to scrutiny by the general citizenry."

To cope successfully with the shift in the patterns of your private life, these matters must be considered:

- The age of your children. Are they preschoolers?
- Do you already have a career outside your home?
- Are you prepared to change the familiar pattern of your life?

The consequence of failing to acknowledge these matters could be a shambles of “unfulfilled commitments and frayed nerves”, thus diminishing the “excitement and satisfaction which should be the rewards from service in municipal life”, in the words of Mrs. Ion.

In local government administration as well, balancing public and private roles appears to be a problem. Some of the women surveyed offer these comments:

- “to put my whole thought and energy into the job, being willing to carry responsibility for the job outside of office hours — I don’t consider it a 9 to 5 job”.
- “my job comes first”.
- “there are no time limits; the council is my employer and the ratepayers pay the salaries, therefore they are entitled to as much service as possible”.
- “in whatever capacity, it’s not a 9 to 5 job; if the occasion arises on weekends, you must be involved”.

These comments indicate not only that local government administration is a lot of hard work, but also that the women surveyed find that workload fulfilling. It would seem that their jobs are not “just jobs” to ensure an income, but that their work is an important part of their lives. Like any working woman who cares about her job, the woman involved in municipal administration will need to seek a happy balance between work and private life.

# Getting Involved: Tips from Women in Local Government



## Part II

*How can you get involved in local government?*

Marion Wilkinson, an alderman for March Township, became concerned about community affairs in the new town of Kanata.

Mayor Gladys Rolling, Township of East Gwillimbury, came to municipal politics through church and community work.

Alderman Mary Conroy of Sudbury was drawn into municipal politics through riding work for a provincial party; she was also frustrated in trying to influence government policy while a member of a professional association.

Alderman Marion Dewar, City of Ottawa, felt that only through the provincial political process could she have any real chance of changing provincial policies.

Mayor Jane Bigelow of London says that only eight years ago she qualified for a "bored housewife" title. "The fact was pounded home", she says, "that the best way to get involved is to take any kind of job, from door-to-door work for a candidate to running for office, with confidence. Get involved and you may love it, as I do."

For women wishing to participate in the public life of their communities, the question of "how" is the one which most frequently comes to mind, but it is not the easiest to answer. Involvement, to be effective, requires more than a sympathetic understanding of "causes". It requires the transformation of commitment into participation, participation that will be productive to local government and personally rewarding to you as an individual.

As Mrs. Ion says in her report, there is no such thing as a right — or wrong — way to get involved in local government. There is, however, a time when your concern and interest in the community at large will motivate you to move from the level of interested spectator to that of committed participant. At that point your interest and commitment may lead you into any number of directions.

As you will see in Part III which describes the structure of local government, there are three basic areas where you may concentrate your interest:

- (a) appointed
- (b) administrative
- (c) elected.

First, however, let's examine an area which is not quite any of these, but which can, if you wish, serve as a good jumping-off point — citizen participation.

## Citizen Participation

Getting involved, for you, may mean volunteer work with various community social services or charitable undertakings. Or you may decide to join certain groups, such as the Association of Women Electors (AWE) or local ratepayers' associations. As the desire to participate increases, involvement will see you attending council meetings (great entertainment!) and keeping yourself informed of the times, dates and places of council and committee meetings, agendas and background materials, the nature of local issues, and also of provincial policies as they may affect your community. All of this information is available in the local library.

You may find yourself discussing local issues with your friends and neighbours, perhaps with a view to forming a neighbourhood interest group, or a citizens' advisory committee to keep aware of and communicate what is going on at local, regional or county council levels. Know the issues of local interest and be ready to talk to your alderman. Involvement may lead you to develop personal skills, to push your point of view (and your own personality) in support of particular concerns: traffic control, public and joint use of community facilities such as schools, improvements in basic amenities, neighbourhood recreation facilities and quality day-care provision.

For some, involvement will mean political parties and working in local "riding" or constituency associations helping to manage political campaigns. For such people the successful election of their particular candidate proves exciting and satisfying.

Still other women may get involved by working part- or full-time for various boards, commissions or societies applying business and management skills obtained through previous employment. *For a list of the boards and societies in your area, contact the clerk's department at your municipal office.*

Another way, however, would be to organize meetings and discussion groups yourself. Having considered the various problems of your neighbourhood, having discussed these issues with others, you could bring community members together with "resource people" (people with experience in solving problems such as those you want to confront). You would in fact be co-ordinating a workshop.

### Organizing a Workshop

To give you an idea of what the organization of a workshop entails, here are some ideas extracted from *Community Conferences and Seminars; Notes for Community Leaders*, published by the Ontario Ministry of Culture and Recreation, Sports and Fitness Division.

1. *The idea.* Something is not quite right in the community. You are concerned about a need, a problem, a desire for clarification or interpretation, a duplication of services, or some other aspect of community life. From this concern comes the question: Should we have a workshop about this?

2. *Is the idea worth a workshop?* Submit your idea to others who share your concern and who may have additional understanding of the issue. Your intention here should be to form a small *steering committee* to consider such questions as:

- is there enough interest in this subject to warrant a workshop?
- can we get adequate and suitable resources to make the workshop worthwhile?
- can we expect strong support from local organizations and institutions?
- can we get suitable accommodation?
- timing — would the workshop conflict with any other community project that involves a large group of citizens?

The committee should check key sources of information and opinion in the community for the answers to these questions. On the basis of those answers, the committee can decide whether or not the workshop should be convened.

3. *Planning the workshop.* The first step here is to appoint a *planning committee*. The original steering committee could probably double as the planning committee. Care should be taken to ensure that committee members share your motivation, are reliable and interact well together. Responsibilities of the planning committee generally include program (agenda and timetable), facilities (accommodation and equipment), publicity, administration (enrolment procedures), and reporting (recording methods and summary report).

In small or local workshops these responsibilities can often be carried out by particular individuals. In larger workshops, sub-committees of the planning committee are usually appointed to manage each.

(i) *Program* — Program planning is crucial. It includes:

- drawing up an effective agenda and a timetable;
- obtaining accurate, complete and up-to-date information for use at the workshop;
- securing suitable resource people;
- finding suitable resource material;
- determining the most effective working procedures and planning accordingly, for example: panels or resource people should be prepared; resource materials should be

- issued at appropriate times; plenary\* and small group relationships in the workshop should be studied and established; and so on;
- planning the movement into discussion groups, reconvening, etc., so that participants may be briefed;
- checking with and informing the facilities committee about space and equipment requirements.

(ii) *Facilities* — The *facilities committee* is responsible for housing the workshop and for all physical equipment. Some of its concerns are:

- securing space for all aspects of the workshop — enrolment, plenary sessions, small groups, meals, etc.
- providing maps of the location; signs and directions to meeting rooms; rules regarding use of rooms; washroom locations; eating facilities, etc.
- arranging for physical items such as display space and displays; chairs and tables; special equipment, etc.
- providing equipment such as P.A. systems, projectors, screens, pencils, tape recorders and operators, ash trays, etc.

(iii) *Publicity* — The *publicity committee* should inform people about the conference as well as stimulate interest and enthusiasm. Some of this committee's responsibilities are:

- clearing all information to be used for publicity with the planning committee;
- analyzing channels of communication in the community and using those that will get the information to the greatest number of people;
- writing releases and getting them to the news media. Releases should start with the information presented simply, and build up to a pitch that peaks at the time of the workshop. If you start to peak too soon, it can result in an anti-climax and loss of interest;
- avoiding dull and routine methods of publicity. The type of release and the information it contains should appeal to the people in the community who could be interested in the conference.

Publicity campaigns are more likely to be successful if based on one or a combination of the following appeals: personal interest, curiosity, loyalty to the community, significance of the project, desire to serve.

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\*A plenary session is a meeting of *all* participants to discuss an item or consider a program in summary.

(iv) *Administration* — The *administrative committee* is responsible for setting up and operating the machinery of the workshop, including enrolment of participants, issuing name tags, distributing programs, fees and receipts (if any), lists and addresses of participants, meal tickets, all financial transactions, records and other related responsibilities.

(v) *Reporting* — The *records and reports committee* has a key job because the impact of the workshop and its effect on future developments will depend largely on this work. The job has two parts — internal reporting and the workshop report.

- *Internal reporting* includes the process of recording small group discussions; reporting these to the plenary session; recording speakers or panel discussions; evaluation procedures; and other similar matters internal to the workshop.
- Planning for this part of the job should include:
  - Pre-workshop meetings with the people who will act as discussion-group recorders;
  - Copies of key speeches should be secured in advance if possible;
  - Decide what to evaluate and how, and establish evaluation procedures.

The *workshop report* should be prepared and issued as soon as possible after the workshop ends. It interprets the aims, accomplishments and recommendations of the workshop in a concise, accurate and readable manner. It should be distributed to the participants, citizens, agencies and organizations of the community.

Careful consideration should be given when a municipal authority approves or rejects the recommendations of a workshop. Through the press, TV, radio, or by direct communication, participants should be made aware of any action or lack of action taken on their recommendations and the reasons.

Throughout the entire process, you should be asking yourself such questions as:

- Are we getting *local involvement* on a broad basis?
- Are we organizing the project *efficiently and economically*?
- Are we producing a *positive, controversial* experience for the participants?
- Are we encouraging *continuing interest* about the issue?

These general principles might be applied to any community conference or workshop. A workshop quickly projects you as an organizer into the *active* role of "citizen participant" in local public

life. Further, it generates interest and involvement within the community — one of your main objectives.

The attractive aspect of citizen participation is that it is, among other things, immediate, productive and free. It requires only that you inform yourself thoroughly before tackling an issue or project, and that you assert your interest and make your presence known.

## Basic Areas of Involvement in Local Government

### (a) Appointed Service

The area of appointed service to your community is a logical extension of citizen participation as described above, and a useful training ground.

*How does one become a citizen appointment to a local board or advisory committee?* Mainly, by having one's interest and qualifications recognized and approved by council.

*How did participation on a local committee come to your attention?* Women who have been involved with local advisory committees offer these answers:

"I saw an ad asking for citizen participants and I submitted a biographical sketch in a letter."

"I don't really know, rather an accident; I was talking to a friend who said volunteers were needed; my husband also applied, but got turned down."

"A young planning student working in the area recommended that I apply and I did."

One woman explained that she wanted "stop" signs erected on her street to discourage speeding. She asked a friend "Who decides this?" and was given the name of the traffic advisory board. "Who is on it?", she asked, and "How could I get on it?". Her friend told her to submit her name to the municipal office and to send a letter outlining reasons why she felt she should be on the board. She did, and in a couple of weeks she was advised that she had been appointed a member of the board.

Membership on local advisory committees (with or without letters of application) has often been purely an expression of local political favour, a recognition of those already involved in the local government of the community. Whether as a reward to those who support successful electoral bids to council, or as compensation to the defeated, committee appointments can be an excellent means of staying close to the action. As a result, there has often been little room for newcomers. Often, too, the majority of the community have shown little interest in committee appointments.

More recently, a few municipal councils have "democratized" the appointment process by naming "striking committees" for the purpose of actually interviewing applicants and advising the council on whom to appoint. In this way, more weight is given to an individual's qualifications and experience in a particular field, and considerably less to his or her political interests. Striking committees are usually as representative as possible of the different parts of the community and are customarily open to attendance by the local press. All applications are considered and, of course, each applicant is interviewed privately. Other municipalities have adopted an interview procedure whereby the applicant is questioned by the entire council as a committee of the whole.

Nowadays, many municipalities place advertisements in the local press. These public notices name the committees for which positions are available, and request interested individuals to submit a letter indicating the particular committee they are interested in (planning, health, hospital management, recreation, etc.), and the experience and expertise they feel they can contribute. As most local advisory committees exist — and cease to exist — at the pleasure of each council, advertisements for vacancies usually appear in the month of January following the election of a new council in the preceding December. (By provincial legislation, municipal elections must be held every two years on the first Monday in December of a municipal election year.) The letters of application are then reviewed by council, selections are made (and approved by by-law) and the successful applicants notified.

### (b) Administration

The field of administration allows you to earn a salary and perhaps choose between a part- or full-time career. Prerequisites can be summed up in two words, experience and education. Alexandra Kerr stresses that women must be receptive to the need to "train in a specific field and . . . choose that field with a careful eye to the future".

While it remains a male-dominated field, the position of clerk, or clerk-treasurer, is the one in which most women occupying senior positions in local government administration are to be found. To the question, "What would you consider to be the best route for a woman to take if she wanted to obtain a position similar to yours?", women employed in local government replied:

— "Training and educational qualifications; the AMCTO course is extremely important but experience on the job is equally important -- and open mindedness."

— "She should have the basic education. University doesn't

do any harm but the community college courses in municipal administration are more relevant."

"Take all the courses you can."

What is this AMCTO course they mention?

The AMCTO course is a correspondence course, the Municipal Administrator Course, offered by Queen's University's Institute of Local Government; it is also available at three community colleges — St. Lawrence (Kingston Campus), Seneca College (Toronto) and Niagara College (Welland). The following notes are extracted from the booklet, *Municipal Administration, A Correspondence Course by the Institute of Local Government*.

*Purpose of the course:* The course is intended to provide general training in municipal and financial administration for people already in the field and for others who are interested in embarking on a community-oriented career service in municipal administration.

*Course requirements:* At Queen's, the course is divided into three one-year terms on subjects relevant to the work of both clerk and treasurer. On completion of each year's term work, an examination must be passed. The university acknowledges by letter the successful conclusion of the first and second year of the course, and a Certificate of Standing is issued by the university on final graduation.

At St. Lawrence, Seneca and Niagara the course is offered one night per week for three semesters, and thus can be completed in one year.

*The course of study:* The first part of the course is intended as an introduction to municipal government. The student examines the subject in various ways: the structure of local government and its place in our system of government, the concepts of municipal law, and familiarization with the use of such statutes and legal documents as a student might be called upon to use in a municipal office. The second part of the course is primarily concerned with internal municipal organization and administration. Finally, emphasis is placed on studying financial administration in the municipal sphere.

For information on registration and the course in general write: The Registrar, Municipal Administration Course, Institute of Local Government, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario K7L 3N6.

Applicants in all years of the course should apply to the Registrar by letter before August of each year for enrolment in the relevant year of the course.

### (c) **Elected Service**

The third area of involvement is as an elected representative of your community whether as a member of council, a school board trustee, or as a public utilities or hydro electric commissioner.

In "A Woman in Politics", Mary Conroy speaks directly on the question of "getting involved" electorally. The former alderman sets out eight main recommendations:

1. Cultivate the ability to listen, learn and the courage to admit mistakes. There is no disgrace in changing one's mind.
2. Understand the issues so that you can discuss them intelligently.
3. Pursue a strong determination to fight for what you think is best for the majority of the electorate, even though strong pressure groups may try to influence you otherwise.
4. The ability to differentiate between constructive and destructive criticism is imperative.
5. Recognize other points of view (although sometimes this is no advantage; it makes it so much easier to vote on some issues if you can't see the merit on the opposing side!).
6. Establish a relationship with other members of your political forum in which each looks on the other as an equal. Never ask for concessions because you are a woman. Fight your battles as a person with a job to be done. Beware of carrying a chip on your shoulder when dealing with your male co-workers.
7. Strive for dependability in carrying out the commitments you make.
8. Present the most attractive appearance you can. It helps to give you confidence in yourself and doesn't hurt you politically, either.

"... Realistically no woman candidate can hope to get elected without the support of men as well as women. However, women are your most reliable and ardent campaign workers (as they are for male politicians); so be sure you have them."

Mrs. Conroy's advice on campaigning is difficult to improve upon. Those who are thinking of *running for local office* — whether in an urban or rural area — can benefit from the following tips:

1. Make your decision to run well in advance of nomination day. Last-minute candidates seldom succeed. Gather your advisers, plot your strategy and begin to campaign early. You sometimes scare off competition: in one election my co-alderman and I announced early, campaigned actively before nomination day

and were re-elected by acclamation. We were told later that several people had considered running against us but felt we were too well-organized and had a head start.

2. Find out about nomination and election procedures from the clerk of your municipality. Arm yourself with a copy of the Municipal Act and study it thoroughly.
3. Seek help and advice from experienced people in your community. The best people to approach are well-known and respected former representatives who have retired.
4. If possible, run in an area where you are best known, where you believe most of your support lies and preferably where a seat is vacant. It is very difficult to unseat an incumbent.
5. Make up a realistic campaign budget . . . . Election literature is your biggest expense and newspaper and television advertising, if you use them, the next. A finance committee is usually formed with the help of your closest supporters and approaches a list of potential donors prepared with the help of the candidate.
6. Get hold of as many sets of voters' lists as you can from the Clerk; if the new lists are late being prepared, get at least one copy of the old list. It won't have changed that much for your initial purpose, which is to identify those people in your area whom you can approach for help. My campaign manager arranges for about 350 men and women to make ten contacts each by telephone or in person on my behalf. This can easily be done in an hour of their time and most people will take on a job of this size; many will volunteer to do more. Involving large numbers of people has the added advantage of committing them to your support. If you have been active in your community, it is not difficult to get this many people or more to work on your behalf.

Make a list of key people to approach for the big jobs such as campaign chairman, finance chairman, telephone captain, taxi service to the polls on election day, publicity, coffee party organizer. Contact these people personally and ask them to help you. This is the hardest part. Don't be discouraged when people you thought would help have all sorts of reasons for not being able to get involved. Take a deep breath and contact the next person on your list. Try to see them personally: it's a lot harder to turn someone down face to face.

Give your key workers a typed list of the jobs you want them to do. This avoids misunderstandings later and they may have some good ideas for you when you talk it over. Select your telephone captain carefully; she is the person who will contact the 350-odd people for help.

7. Get one group of people together to divide the voters' list into groups of ten and mail these to your workers along with a letter from you asking them to contact these voters personally or by telephone. Suggest something they might say and always tell them that if there are any specific issues the voter wants to discuss to forward the voter's name and telephone number to you directly so that you can contact him. Make it clear to your workers that they *do not argue with voters*. Give your workers a time limit during which their contacts should be made: not too long before election day. You want people to remember your name.
8. Make a huge calendar for the period from which you declare yourself a candidate until a few days after election (to allow for pickup of signs, thank you notes and other odd jobs). Fill in target dates for delivery of campaign literature completion of your organization, coffee parties as they are arranged, radio and taping sessions, interviews with the news media and target dates for completion of door-knocking in key areas.
9. From the clerk, get a poll map of your area and arm yourself with the results of the last one or two elections. With your panel of advisers (every candidate should have a few trusted people to "kick around" ideas with) decide where to concentrate your personal door-to-door campaign.
10. Draft and order your literature. Be sure to use a recent picture and get a firm delivery date from your printer. Try to keep within your budget.
11. Talk to the salesmen from your local radio and television stations; get rates, taping times and be sure you know what is included in the price quoted. Is it just the time or does the price cover the use of the studio for taping? (I got caught on this once.) Don't be surprised when you find out that many television stations have two lists of rates; one for regular advertisers and a higher one for election advertising. Decide if you want to use these media and if you do, write your material, sticking to one or two issues in each spot. I have found it more worthwhile to buy one or two prime time slots than to buy several cheaper slots when the audience is not so extensive.
12. Write out your press releases announcing your candidacy and enclose with them 5-inch-by-7-inch glossy black and white prints of your photo to all newspapers; send the release only to radio stations and query your local TV station re the type of picture they need for their files; some need colour, others need non-glossy black and white and certain sizes. Send out all of your press releases simultaneously in advance of nomination day.

13. I also use a business card, which can be made up quickly and allows me to start door-to-door campaigning before nomination day. You must have something to leave with people to remind them of you. (The card simply says who I am, the office for which I am a candidate, my address and phone number and a reminder such as "At your service in Ward 6").

I also use these between campaigns. If I have occasion to visit a constituent about a problem I sometimes take a few moments to call on others on the street, ask if they have problems I can help them with and leave my card, suggesting they keep it beside the telephone. This has been very successful.

14. The best time to knock on doors so that you can meet people is between 6:30 and 9:30 p.m. Before that, you may interrupt their dinner and afterward people start to retire. It is hard to knock on that first door but it gets easier as you go on because you really do get a nice response from ninety-nine percent of people. I try to leave apartment buildings for nasty weather.

Stephen Clarkson, professor of political economics at the University of Toronto and a seasoned political campaigner, believes municipal governments are personality-centred. Any exposure where people can meet and talk with you will be very helpful. Watch the newspaper for public functions and don't be shy about introducing yourself to people. You can go without invitation to meetings open to any member of the public; i.e., teas, meetings of playground associations, ratepayer meetings, open meetings of clubs such as Canadian Club (which brings noted speakers to town), art displays and displays of ethnic dancing, culture and crafts.

I wear a big button that says VOTE FOR ME almost everywhere I go during my campaign. People say . . . "Vote for you for what?" and this is the only opening I need.

15. I don't believe in signs that pollute the countryside but prefer to have six or more professionally made posters with space for my current picture. I approach corner store owners in key areas of my ward and ask them if they would post it in their store. Be sure to mention you will be back to pick it up the day after the election or they might be thrown out. The posters, if carefully stored, are reusable from election to election. Be very sure to write these people a special thank-you note.

16. On election day, check with your taxi service chairman, be sure your workers get out to vote early and don't forget to vote yourself. Drive around to each poll once during the day to see what the voting turnout is and if you have the manpower, arrange for scrutineers in each poll who can tell you who has voted, so

your phone committee can then make sure to remind known supporters to get out and vote. Any candidate who gets her supporters out to vote stands a good chance of winning.

17. Early in the campaign make yourself known to members of the media and be sure to let them know where you can be reached after polls close. They also have "slow news days" during the campaign and frequently will use some of your information, interview you or quote you if you are able to make a good impression.

18. I usually have an informal gathering of key workers and friends to await the results. Plan for this; refreshment can be very simple and the group informal; you will likely have to leave for a television appearance during the evening, so make sure to deputize someone to act as hostess in your absence. No matter what the outcome of the election, it is a gracious gesture to telephone your opponents to console or congratulate them.

19. The next day, start your cleanup of signs, analyze poll results, make notes about the conduct of the campaign, file samples of election material with the notes for use in the next election. Start to write the hundreds of thank-you notes to your workers. I write a personal note to each one; sometimes they don't get it until months after the election but they do eventually receive my personal thanks. Many have commented how very much they appreciated it and I don't have any difficulty enlisting their help in another election. In my community it is customary also for each candidate to place a small advertisement in the newspaper thanking all those who voted for her.

In summary then a great deal can be learned from this sample of comments from women who answered the following question about participation in local government:

"If you were asked to offer advice or an opinion to women wanting to be involved in the public life of their communities, what would you recommend they do?"

— "Show interest and give a lot of yourself. Attend council meetings and get all the information you can. Appreciate the difference between being involved and making decisions, on the one hand, and merely observing the proceedings on the other."

— "Work hard, do the best you can and don't be afraid of change . . . (Women) must weigh criticism to determine whether it is constructive or not and then accept it or ignore it as the case may be."

- “Concentrate on a local issue in your area. Attend council meetings — it’s the first place to go, it’s where you hear what you like and don’t like. Newspapers only cover some aspects of the meetings.”
- “Get involved in the community and build up your reputation through involvement in local groups, boards and committees which are often advertised in the local papers. *Know the basic operation of the municipality.* From this involvement you can move into political involvement.”

# Where to Start: The Ontario Municipality



## Part III

A major problem facing people who wish to participate in local government is a lack of knowledge about the character and structure of the municipality in Ontario. Without an elementary understanding of the workings of a municipality, decisions as to which areas of interest to develop and which career paths to follow are difficult to make.

### *First, what is a municipality?*

According to The Municipal Act, "municipality means a locality the inhabitants of which are incorporated".

So, a municipality is a corporation. In many ways it is similar to a business corporation: it has legal personality and status, and so can sue and be sued. For purposes of exercising its powers, a municipality can make contracts and borrow money.

### *What is the relationship of the municipality with its constituents?*

Whether as an elected representative, an administrative official or an appointee to a local board, to appreciate your role in the local government process, you must understand the relationship between a municipality and its constituents (inhabitants, taxpayers and electors).

*Inhabitants* are all the people who live within the geographical boundaries of a municipality.

With certain exceptions, all owners of property located in a municipality and all persons carrying on business in a municipality are *taxpayers*, whether they live there or not. In addition, with certain exceptions, all residential tenants residing in the municipality are taxpayers.

*Electors* are those inhabitants and taxpayers who are entitled to *vote* at municipal elections. According to The Municipal Elections Act, an elector must be a resident of the municipality where he or she will be voting, must be a Canadian citizen or other British subject, and must have reached the age of 18 years on or before polling date. There are also provisions in this act allowing certain classes of non-residents to vote.

It is important to realize that the council of a municipality is elected both to legislate (i.e., to pass by-laws) and to administer the municipality on behalf of the members of the corporation, the inhabitants.

Taxpayers supply the money needed to operate the municipality, but it should be the inhabitants who command the attention of the council. Elected representatives (and indirectly municipal employees, too) are accountable to the community — to you.

A municipal corporation may do only those things that provincial laws enable it to do; it cannot act unless it has specific authority

given to it by provincial statute. If the corporation does an act for which it has no express authority it is said to act *ultra vires*, or in other words beyond its bounds.

There is a section in The Municipal Act which appears, at first glance, to give very broad powers to a municipality:

“Every council may pass such by-laws and make such regulations . . . in matters not specifically provided for by this Act as may be deemed expedient . . .” (Section 242).

The courts, however, have insisted that this section be strictly construed and this has limited its scope.

The responsibility for ensuring that a municipality does not act *ultra vires* rests with the courts and with you as an inhabitant and taxpayer in the community. You or any other party may take a matter to court and have an offending by-law declared invalid.

In addition to The Municipal Act, there are now well over 100 statutes affecting municipalities to some degree or another. As well, there are many regulations and instructions issued by provincial government ministries and agencies under the provisions of these statutes.

As a further complication, the Legislature may pass *private acts* relating to specific matters not covered by other general legislation. These acts usually pertain to municipalities which have been faced with problems that are not common to other local governments in Ontario.

## Types of Municipalities

In Ontario, there are eight basic types of municipalities: Regional Municipalities • Counties • Cities • Separated Towns • Towns • Villages • Townships • Improvement Districts.

Traditionally, municipalities were distinguished by (a) their size of population and (b) their rural or urban nature. Today, however, the growth of population and the spread of urban development into previously rural areas have blurred these distinctions. In Ontario, the structure of local government has for a number of years been undergoing radical change with the creation of new regional and district municipalities, and more recently the restructured county of Oxford.

In view of this reorganization of local government (“restructuring”), another way to distinguish types of municipalities is by *tier*, or *level of responsibilities*. A municipality is either upper tier (counties and restructured municipalities), lower tier (cities in restructured areas, towns, townships and villages) or single tier (cities outside restructured areas, separated towns and most muni-

cipalities throughout northern Ontario). The range of services which a municipality gives to its constituents can be determined, then, from its tier position as well as from its title.

## Two-Tier System

Most of southern Ontario is organized into municipalities; that is, there are few areas of land in the southern part of the province without municipal status. Most of these municipalities are part of the two-tier system where the county or restructured municipality form the upper tier, and the cities, towns, townships and villages within its borders (but not the cities or separated towns in unstructured counties) represent the lower tier.

### a) The county

In Ontario, county councils are mainly composed of the reeves and deputy reeves of the constituent local municipalities (excepting the cities and separated towns). In the restructured county of Oxford, however, *all* local municipalities (including the City of Woodstock and the former Separated Town of Ingersoll) have representation on county council. In place of reeves and deputy reeves, whose positions have been eliminated with restructuring, membership on Oxford county council consists of each area mayor and one member of each local council, as well as the mayor and five local members from the City of Woodstock.

A county council in general does not levy taxes directly, but has the power to levy a rate for county purposes which is calculated and actually levied on behalf of the county by any or all local municipality(ies).

County responsibilities include the county road system (this is mandatory) and often social services, such as aid for the needy, public health inspection, hospital assistance and homes for the aged. Not all counties, however, provide the latter services; in some, the lower tier municipalities continue to provide for their own inhabitants.

### b) The new forms

Metropolitan, regional and district municipalities are another, more recent, form of two-tier structure. All local municipalities within a restructured municipality, regardless of their designation, are lower tier. Upper-tier or regional councillors are elected directly in, or from, the local municipalities. However, to understand the composition of an individual upper-tier council, you should consult the specific act which incorporates the given restructured municipality

(e.g., The Regional Municipality of York Act, RSO 1970, Chapter 408).

Upper-tier municipalities do not tax directly, but rather apportion their costs to the lower-tier municipalities.

But upper-tier municipalities provide for more services than do counties. Roads, social services, water treatment, sewage treatment, regional planning, police protection and long-term financing are usually regional services. Lower-tier municipalities are responsible for local roadways, garbage collection, parks and recreation, and may also be responsible for water distribution and sewage collection.

## Single-Tier Systems

Single-tier municipalities occur throughout northern Ontario and in some places in southern Ontario. In the north, many municipalities are separated from one another by territory without municipal organization. In the south, the cities and separated towns outside restructured areas are single tier. Single-tier municipalities levy their own property tax rates to supplement provincial and federal grants and generally supply their own services; they may, however, co-operate with neighbouring municipalities to provide services through joint boards. Examples of such co-operation are found in district social and family service units, suburban road commissions, and so on.

## Improvement Districts

Among municipalities, the improvement district is unique. In places where there has been sudden growth and where no basic community existed before an industry — mining or pulp and paper, for example — moved in, an improvement district provides quick municipal organization. A board of trustees appointed by the province manages the municipality until the resident taxpayers want to establish a village or a township. All improvement districts (with the exception of Bicroft in Haliburton County) are located in northern Ontario.

## The Municipal Structure

Now let's examine structure: What are the basic characteristics of the structure of a municipality?

To a point, the structure of a municipality is like that of a business corporation. Its electors choose a council to manage the corporation and to take all executive action on its behalf, just as the shareholders of a business corporation elect a board of directors to manage its affairs. The municipal council appoints officials to carry out its day-to-day operations, just as a board of directors appoints company officers.

The relationship of the municipal council with its electors, however, is not fully comparable to the business corporation and its shareholders. First, in a municipal corporation, a person cannot be both an elected representative of the municipality (a member of council), and an appointed official of the municipality (an employee), at the same time\*. As well, unlike a business corporation which sets out to make a profit, a municipality is incorporated in order to provide services for its constituents at optimum cost. *Service, not profit, is the purpose of the municipal corporation.*

Municipal corporations, therefore, tend to be highly complex organizations, administered by many different departments, committees and boards. In her study paper, *Careers for Women in Local Government*, Alexandra Kerr classifies the functions of the municipality into three areas:

Finance: the treasury, the purchasing department, tax collection and the clerk's office.

Works (hard services): such functions as public works, sanitation, pollution control, engineering, building inspection and plumbing.

Development (soft services): the planning function, industrial development, health and social services and the general administrative areas of the legal office personnel.

## The Council

Municipal council is the forum in which the majority of decisions affecting your community are taken.

The council is in a central position in what may be called an "accountability pattern". On one hand, council makes policy and administers municipal operations on behalf of the constituents; on the other, it determines the responsibilities and terms of reference of the various committees; establishes and is responsible for some local boards; and appoints senior officials (department heads, special assistants, etc.). While appointed officials and elected representatives may advise and recommend certain courses of action, it is

\*Two exceptions: see Sections 393 and 502, ss.9 of The Municipal Act.

the council only which has authority to administer activities on behalf of the municipality. Individual members of the council have no legal authority to act on behalf of the council or the municipality.

Indeed, while the *head of the council* — the mayor, chairman, warden (the head of county council) or reeve — chairs meetings of the council and may sit on many of its committees, either ex-officio per provincial statute, or on approval of council (more usually the case), his or her vote carries no more weight than any other member's vote\*. Policy is decided and action taken invariably by the council as a whole. The council's authority is modified only by the authority vested in certain municipal officials by provincial statutes, and similarly by a degree of independence granted to some local boards by the statutes.

To be valid and binding, decisions of council must be enacted as *resolutions* (for certain purposes) or as *by-laws*, and recorded in the minutes of the council. You can expect to find a by-law to support every important decision of the council. There should be a by-law for every decision to borrow money from a bank, to levy taxes, to share costs on a joint project, to begin a capital project, to adopt a budget and to hire a senior official. Certain municipal by-laws may require provincial approval.

An important by-law which you should know about is the *procedural by-law*. For our purposes, a procedural by-law can be described as one which, passed by council, provides the guidelines needed for orderly and efficient meetings. Primarily, it gives the head of council the tools necessary to limit debate and keep the meeting time available to conduct the municipal business at hand. It also sets out the procedure to be followed by the clerk in the preparation of the minutes and agendas, and stipulates when these are to be distributed to the members of council. The general content of a procedural by-law is explained in A. H. Marshall's *Financial Administration in Local Government*. It should be noted that the practice of having a comprehensive procedural by-law is still far from universal. In many municipalities the recording of the council's policy decisions is fragmented, and seldom are the many practices and resolutions governing the conduct of council sessions assembled in one by-law.

### Committees

Most of the detailed administrative work in which council members become involved is handled by committees. Committee members are expected to become well versed in the activities for which they are responsible. This way positive recommendations for policy

decisions can be developed more quickly than if council as a whole considers the issue. Discussion is generally informal, and committee members have the opportunity to sound out local opinion before making a recommendation to the council.

In addition to individual committees, most municipal councils also use a procedural device known as the *committee of the whole*. When council meets as a committee of the whole, formal council procedures are suspended and *all* members of council form a committee designating a chairman to consider informally a specific item of business. When the matter has been resolved, the council resumes its sitting and, if necessary, takes formal action.

The committee of the whole is often used (a) to consider matters that go beyond the particular responsibilities of a given committee; (b) to consider appointments to local boards and committees; and (c) to exclude the public and press from the discussion of a particular item of business.

The number of committees in a municipality depends on local needs, as does the membership of committees and the means of appointing chairmen and selecting committee members. *Standing committees* of the council are usually provided for such on-going activities as public works, finance, fire protection and social and family services. *Special* or "*ad hoc*" committees are formed to handle one specific matter only, and often include selected experts who are not members of the council. Standing committees generally continue during the lifetime of the council. A special committee with its more limited purpose usually disbands when its task has been accomplished.

With the exception of such committees as planning, roads and land division, there is no authority in provincial statutes permitting committees to make decisions independent of the council, so their function is restricted to that of advising or recommending. Because final discretion rests with the council, committee recommendations must, to be effective, be passed by the council either as a resolution or by-law. Nevertheless, despite the fact that the majority of council committees have no legal status, they can have a strong influence in a municipality. Their specific responsibilities and terms of reference are usually found in the municipality's procedural by-law.

Some cities and boroughs still have a *Board of Control* composed of the mayor and two or four controllers who are elected *at large* (by general vote). It is, in effect, an executive committee of the council whose separate existence, as well as its authority to act independently of council, are formally recognized by provincial law. The duties of a Board of Control are laid out in The Municipal Act; they include the preparation of a budget, the calling and awarding of tenders, the hiring and firing of appointed department heads and — a real catch-all — any other matter which the council gives it to

\*Exception: see Sections 27, 27(a) and 27(b) of The Municipal Act.

look after. As a council member has no authority to speak or act for the entire council, so a controller cannot speak or act for the Board of Control as a whole. The council as a whole may only obstruct or alter the actions of a Board of Control in matters of finance or personnel, and this only by a two-thirds majority vote.

### **Appointed Officials**

The everyday details of municipal administration and advice on policy are the concern of appointed officials. Duties, terms of reference and titles of the officials differ widely from municipality to municipality because they are determined by local practice.

The Municipal Act requires a municipality to have a clerk, a treasurer (or a clerk-treasurer), one or more tax collectors and an auditor. These officials are appointed by council and, with the exception of the auditor, hold office at the pleasure of the council. The Municipal Act requires the clerk to keep the books, records and accounts of the council (but not of the corporation). It is the treasurer who receives, keeps and pays out all the corporation's money; the treasurer is also responsible for the preparation and publication of financial statements of the municipality.

(The head of the council is, according to The Municipal Act, the chief executive officer of the municipal corporation. In practice, however, his executive duties are performed largely by the appointed officials and members of their staff.)

An appointed official may wear several hats including those of clerk, treasurer and collector. In small municipalities, officials often serve part-time only. In larger municipalities, titles may be given to officials which indicate that their function is broader than that required by statute, such as "Chief Administrative Officer", "Clerk Administrator" or "City Manager". Except where provincial legislation or a council by-law indicates otherwise, all appointed officials are either directly or indirectly responsible to the council for carrying out the duties assigned to them.

Although it is seldom included in the by-law, appointed officials often make policy recommendations to the council. They also advise the council on the full effect any of its decisions may have. Municipalities which do not have officials qualified in such fields as law, finance, engineering or planning often obtain advice by using the services of professional consultants.

### **Local Boards**

A useful definition of the term "local board" can be found in The Municipal Affairs Act: a local board is

"Any board, commission, committee, body or local authority

established or exercising any power or authority under any general or special Act with respect to any of the affairs or purposes, including school purposes, of a municipality."

This legal definition covers a wide variety of boards such as library boards, public utilities commissions\*, community centre and arena management boards, as well as conservation authorities and suburban road commissions. It does not include, however, certain private organizations which provide health, social or recreational services, and which are sometimes subsidized by a grant from the municipality. Examples include hospital boards, children's aid societies (CAS), boards of management for homes for the aged, day nurseries, etc.

Legislation requires municipalities to establish local boards for some services (e.g., community centres) but not for all. One municipality might provide services such as parking, water and recreation services directly through council, whereas another municipality might choose local boards for the same purposes.

Local boards also vary in their relationship to the council, to the electorate, and to provincial government ministries. The extent to which a local board is accountable to its council is determined by the statute under which it is established; the board may be completely accountable (e.g., parking authorities), almost completely autonomous (e.g., boards of education), or its accountability may fall somewhere between these two extremes. Some boards (library boards) are appointed entirely by council; others (e.g., police commissions) include provincial representatives. A few such as boards of education and public utilities commissions are directly elected.

Most local boards are dependent on the council for their revenue and for capital funds. There are, however, notable exceptions. School boards, for example, though actually funded in part through local property taxes, are in no way accountable to council for the mill rates they set and the volume of property taxes they collect in the municipality. Public utilities commissions, on the other hand, generate sufficient revenue from their own operations to be self-supporting, except for major capital expenditure. Others (e.g., homes for the aged) receive substantial grants directly from the province while obtaining only additional revenue through the council. As well, some agencies (e.g., CAS's) also determine their budgets, make expenditures and seek funding without the direct approval of council.

Local boards may not operate their own bank accounts unless

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\*Public utilities commissions (PUC) may deal with such services as electricity supply, water or public transport.

provincial legislation gives them authority to do so. Community centre and recreation commissions, for example, do not have this authority. In these cases the handling of the local board's money is the responsibility of the treasurer of the municipality. Many municipalities appoint the municipal treasurer as the treasurer of all their local boards; this makes a central accounting staff available to all the separate organizations and provides better co-ordination in cash flow.

Other boards which enjoy a high degree of autonomy from both the municipal council and the electorate are joint boards of several municipalities, whose members are appointed by the respective councils and whose costs are shared by the supporting municipalities. An example here is the conservation authority. Generally, they are responsible for an area which, while including parts of several municipalities, is not co-terminous with any of them. Health units are frequently managed by joint boards.

Every municipality has different types and numbers of local boards. For this reason, we cannot describe each board in detail here, nor can we detail information about the legislation by which each is established. You must first determine what local boards there are and then examine their place in the accountability of your municipality.

## Provincial-Municipal Relations

What is the relationship of the municipality with the province? Under the British North America Act, *municipalities are the concern of the provinces*, rather than the federal government. Municipalities are not sovereign governments. They derive whatever powers they have from acts of the provincial legislature.

From time to time, municipal corporations may find this limitation of power frustrating. It may be necessary, for example, to carry out some needed local service which is not explicitly permitted in the existing legislation. If a municipality acts outside its powers, however, it risks challenge in the courts; a municipal council has to seek either an amendment to The Municipal Act, or private legislation giving it the authority to act. Larger municipalities in particular often seek private acts to give them special powers.

### The Provincial Government and Municipal Functions

The relationship between the province and its municipalities has mainly to do with the provision of services to the citizens of Ontario. The Legislature decides which services will be provided by the

provincial government and which by local government. Acts are amended to transfer various responsibilities from the local to the provincial level and vice versa almost every year.

The province encourages municipalities to provide certain basic services by providing:

- grants based on actual expenditure (e.g., grants for highways).
- grants for specific services (e.g., policing), although these need not be spent on the service itself.
- capital grants for needed facilities. These grants take the form of either capital donations or reimbursement of debt charges. (e.g., grants for constructing community centres and for reimbursing the debt charges on schools.)
- grants for the salaries of certain appointed officials. These grants are made if a municipality hires a properly qualified official (e.g., a full-time recreation officer).
- operating grants to joint boards. Such grants, which are larger in amount than grants to individual municipalities, encourage municipalities to co-operate and form larger units to service greater areas. (An example of such a co-operative venture is the health unit, or the public transit system in "twin" cities such as Kitchener-Waterloo.)
- grants towards the cost of planning and implementing unusually expensive programs (e.g., urban renewal schemes).
- penalties for failing to provide certain services. (The province can bring a municipality before the courts if it refuses to provide sewage treatment, for example.)

### Financing Arrangements for Local Services

Provincial revenues are widely used to defray the cost of municipal services. In some cases the support may be 100 percent of the cost. The province provides this assistance for three main reasons:

1. The provincial government could, of course, provide such services itself, but they are supplied more effectively if administration is kept at the local level and priorities are decided by local elected representatives.
2. The full range of services demanded of local government is too costly to be provided solely from municipal taxation.
3. The tax base of a municipality is inadequate to support the standard of service expected by most residents of Ontario.

People expect the quality of life to improve even in areas where the ability of the local inhabitants to pay for it is severely limited.

### **Provincial Direction and Determination**

Provincial government ministries and agencies have close and direct ties with the departments and boards of local government. The Ontario government is placing a widening range of responsibilities in the hands of elected municipal councils. The regulatory powers of the provincial government are extensive, however; some are used frequently while others are seldom, if ever, applied. Two examples of agencies through which the province exercises its authority are the Ontario Municipal Board and the Environmental Hearing Board; both are actively involved in municipal activities.

The Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) is an administrative tribunal whose approval must be obtained by a municipality before it engages in certain activities such as incurring long-term debt or changing its zoning by-laws.

The Environmental Hearing Board is responsible for conducting hearings into applications for the construction and extension of sewage treatment plants, water works and land-fill sites in municipalities. In this capacity it provides recommendations to the Ministry of the Environment relating to the approval or otherwise of these applications.

A third example is the Ministry of Treasury, Economics and Intergovernmental Affairs which has wide directive powers. Occasionally — if, for example, a municipality's solvency appears threatened — the ministry may place a municipality under supervision and control. Once matters are again on a sound footing, the administration is turned back to local control.

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### **Basic Reference Tools**

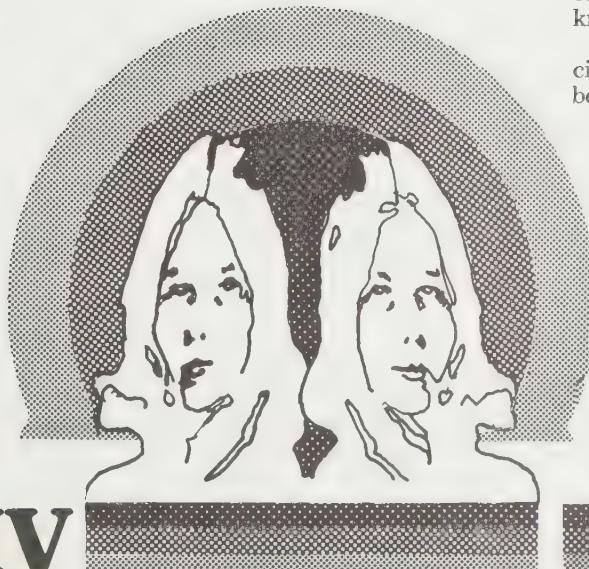
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Obviously, then, the legal position and responsibilities of an Ontario municipality are complex. Although your participation in local government will not likely require you to master this complexity, you would be well advised to become familiar with certain reference works. The basic reference is *The Municipal Act*, the act which governs the general conduct of all municipalities. Easy access to all Ontario statutes and regulations is provided by the codified *Revised Statutes of Ontario* (RSO), a consolidation of the existing legislation in Ontario compiled every ten years by a team of legal experts. Continuous up-dating to the most recent RSO is provided by the *Ontario Statute Citator*. You might also consult Rogers' *Law*

*of Canadian Municipal Corporations*. In D. C. MacDonald's book, *The Government and Politics in Ontario*, there is a comprehensive study of the provincial-municipal scene by Allan O'Brien, "Father Knows Best: a Look at the Provincial-Municipal Relationship in Ontario". This, too, is a helpful article.

Check with your public library to see whether these materials are available or can be ordered. (For further suggestions, see the Bibliography.)

# Now You're Involved



## Part IV

This booklet and the people behind it are concerned not only with International Women's Year. The intent of *Women and Local Government . . . a beginning* is to encourage enlightened participation of women now and far into the future. Your attitudes will affect your neighbours and friends, your children . . . and their children. Your contributions may not stop you from feeling frustrated with the various levels of government, but at least you'll learn who to yell at, who to campaign against and what to fight for.

Meanwhile, consider some of the rewards:

- an enlarged view of your municipality and its inhabitants.
- the development of such qualities as patience, tolerance and an understanding of the other person's point of view.
- the learning experience.
- the satisfaction of seeing community accomplishments that *you* had a hand in, directly or indirectly.

Democratic government means the opportunity for you, the citizen (and that means female *and* male), to take part in what goes on in your neighbourhood, province and nation. Democracy thrives not on passive acceptance, but on participation.

The women already in local government in Ontario, whose comments and encouragement are sprinkled among these pages, know this. They stand behind you and beside you.

As an elected, appointed or administrative public servant, as a citizen participant, you're just in time to make this year your beginning.



# Appendix: Municipal Associations in Ontario

## Association of Counties and Regions of Ontario

President, D. R. Thompson                    365 Bay Street  
Exec. Director, Mrs. C. Ion                    Orillia L3V 3X4  
    705-325-5064

## Association of Municipalities of Ontario

President, Gladys Rolling                    Convention Mezzanine  
Exec. Director, M. Dunbar                    Royal York Hotel  
    Toronto M5J 1E3  
    416-864-1033

## Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities

President, H. R. Bielek                    220 Algonquin Blvd. E.  
Secretary-Treasurer, G. B. Chevrette      Timmins P4N 1B3  
    705-264-1331

## Northeastern Ontario Municipal Association

President, M. Hotte                            Box 490  
Secretary-Treasurer L. J. Adshead          Cochrane P0L 1C0  
    705-272-4361

## Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association

President, W. Springer                        City Hall, Brodie Street  
Secretary-Treasurer, J. MacDonald            Thunder Bay 'F' P7E 5V3  
    807-623-2711

## Ontario Association of Rural Municipalities

President, D. Williams                        Convention Mezzanine  
Secretary-Treasurer D. Rodgers              Royal York Hotel  
    Toronto M5J 1E3  
    416-864-1035

## Organization of Small Urban Municipalities of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (Formerly the town and village section, AMO)

President, D. Logan                            107 King Street W.  
Secretary, B. W. Baxter                        Cobourg K9A 2M4  
    416-372-2288

## Municipal Liaison Committee

Chairman, A. C. Eggleton                    Convention Mezzanine  
Exec. Director, Ms. S. J. Gordon            Royal York Hotel  
    Toronto M5J 1E3  
    416-361-0929

The Municipal Liaison Committee (MLC) is composed of representatives of the three major municipal associations in Ontario — the Association of Counties and Regions of Ontario, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and the Ontario Association of Rural Municipalities — as well as representatives from Metropolitan Toronto.

The Committee meets three times per month; twice on its own, and on the third occasion, with the provincial Treasurer and various other Ministers, thus becoming the Provincial-Municipal Liaison Committee (PMLC).

The meetings of the PMLC (which are open to the public) provide the MLC with the opportunity to examine and discuss issues relevant to local government in Ontario.

Periodically, representatives of the federal government meet with the provincial and municipal representatives to discuss items of interest to all three levels of government. At such times, the meeting is redesignated the Federal-Provincial-Municipal Liaison Committee (FPMLC).



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*Community conferences and seminars: notes for community leaders*, Sports and Fitness Division, Ontario Ministry of Culture and Recreation.\*

Conroy, Mary M., "A woman in politics", *Chatelaine Magazine*, April 1973. (Use of excerpts was kindly authorized by the author.)

*Equal opportunity for women in Ontario: a plan for action*, Provincial Green Paper, Provincial Secretariat for Social Development, June, 1973.

*A guide for the municipal auditor in Ontario*, Municipal Accounting Branch, Ontario Department of Municipal Affairs, June, 1970.

Hickey, Paul, *Decision-making processes in Ontario's local governments*, Ontario Ministry of Treasury, Economics and Intergovernmental Affairs.\*

Ion, Caroline, ed., *Women in local government: an OCLG study project*, September, 1974.

MacDonald, D. C., *The government and politics in Ontario*, Macmillan, 1975.

Marshall, A. H., *Financial administration in local government*, Allen and Unwin for the Royal Institute of Public Administration, 1970.

## *Municipal act\**

## *Municipal affairs act\**

*Municipal directory*, an annual directory of Ontario municipalities and their officials, and regional Ontario government offices. Published by the Ontario Ministry of Treasury, Economics and Intergovernmental Affairs.\*

## *Municipal elections act\**

*Municipal world*, an informative monthly magazine on Ontario municipal life. Subscriptions can be obtained by writing: Municipal World Limited, P.O. Box 390, 360 Talbot Street, St. Thomas, Ontario, N5P 3V3.

## *Ontario gazette*

## *Ontario human rights code\**

*Ontario statute citator*, Canada Law Book Ltd., 80 Cowdray Court, Agincourt, Ontario, M1S 1S5.

## *Planning act\**

Report of the Royal Commission on *The status of women in Canada*, Ottawa, 1970.

## *Revised statutes of Ontario\**

Rogers, Ian MacF., *Law of Canadian municipal corporations*, The Carswell Co. Ltd., Toronto.

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\*These publications may be obtained at the Ontario Government Bookstore, 880 Bay Street, Toronto, Ontario, M7A 1Y7. (416-965-2054).





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